DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 394 863 SO 025 386

AUTHOR	Willoughby, Meg; And Others
TITLE	Behind the Scenes: Measuring Student Progress in the Arts and Beyond. Evaluation and Research Report 95E.06.
INSTITUTION	Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, N.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 95
NOTE	11p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Evaluation and Research Dept., Wake County Public School System, 3600 Wake Forest Rd., Raleigh, NC 27611.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Art Education; *Cognitive Ability; *Curriculum Guides; Dance; Drama; Elementary Secondary Education; *Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; Intelligence; Music; Performance Based Assessment; Performance Factors; Visual Arts
IDENTIFIERS	*Multiple Intelligences; Wake County Public School System NC

ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings of a collaboration between the Evaluation and Research Departments and the Arts Education Department of the Wake County (North Carolina) Public School System with teachers of the district to pilot performance assessments in art programs. In an effort to accurately assess the arts, various alternative (non-linguistic and logical-mathematical) methods were explored that allowed the evaluation of strengths and learning styles, such as spatial, kinesthetic, and musical. The difficult challenge of evaluating student growth and progress in the often subjective character of the arts with objective assessment was visited by teachers--first in staff-development workshops and then in their classrooms. The evaluation process was a valuable tool for teachers, and it benefited the teachers in: (1) lesson planning; (2) evaluating student success; (3) increasing accountability to principal, parent, and student; (4) sharing overall progress of the arts in education with others (e.g., funding agencies); and (5) aiding in cross-curriculum assessment. Working drafts for dance, music, drama, and visual art of their arts assessment models are included in this report. (DQE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
ts of view or opinions stated in this iment do not necessarily represent ial OERI position or policy.

ED 394 863

Behind the Scenes: Measuring Student Progress in the Arts and Beyond

Authors: Meg Willoughby, Helmuts Feifs, Nancy Baenen, and Elizabeth Grimes

Evaluation and Research Department
Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, NC

E&R Report 95E.06
July 1995

1995 has been declared the "Year of the Arts in Education" for North Carolina. Yet, demonstrating the benefits and positive effects of our art programs in an objective way is often a challenge. In 1994-95, the Evaluation and Research and the Arts Education Departments collaborated with teachers to pilot performance assessments in art programs. The benefits of ongoing performance assessments extend across content areas as well as to administrators, policy makers, and other interested parties (e.g., funding agencies). The process used and lessons learned about successfully implementing performance assessments as instructional and evaluation tools provide powerful insight to the arts and beyond.

BACKGROUND

How does work in the arts benefit students overall? How can art teachers share the value of their work with other interested parties?

Education is continually changing and evolving to accommodate the needs of students. Ongoing assessment and evaluation is increasingly more important to teachers, policy makers, administrators, and funding agencies. New trends in educational evaluation and assessment include using performance assessment and assessing multiple intelligences.

In an effort to accurately assess the arts, various alternative methods for evaluation are being explored by schools (e.g., comprehensive holistic tasks and projects, videotapes and audiotapes, journals, observations and checklists, student exhibitions, and teach-reteach cooperative learning methods). These methods reflect a growing trend towards performance assessments; students are assessed on arts-specific knowledge rather than general academic aptitude. Performance assessments can be a valuable behind-the-scenes tool to assist teachers in sharing information about student progress with students, parents, and administrators. Other interested parties will want to know about the overall success of the program as well.

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences is also relevant to the development of assessment techniques for the arts and other content areas. The theory emphasizes that there are at least seven kinds of intelligences, but only two are typically measured by most tests--linguistic and logical-mathematical. Gardner stresses that a student's strengths in other areas, such as spatial, kinesthetic, or musical, can be used to build performance in all subjects. In terms of assessments, portfolio or performance assessments can be designed to reflect students' different strengths and learning styles and to show how the arts contribute to academic growth.

Evaluating success and effectiveness for arts-related disciplines is often difficult. The challenges include marking individual student growth and progress; measuring short- and long-term overall effects of the arts in schools; and providing feedback to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers. Because of the often subjective character of the arts, assessments can help to objectively share the benefits of art programs with others.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Nancy Baenen
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SO 025 386

WORKSHOPS

Are we reaching our students, and are they responding and comprehending? What are the most important lessons to be learned in this class/section?

In the spring of 1994-95, the WCPSS Evaluation and Research and the Arts Education Departments organized two workshops with Chapter 2-funded, arts-disciplined teachers. Workshops were structured to promote active participation and open dialogue within and across the disciplines of arts education and evaluation.

Creating assessments which captured student growth and learning without destroying the more abstract and subjective value of the arts was the challenge undertaken for this project. The art teachers initially had some reservations about developing an assessment tool because they did not want to see the abstract quality of the arts restricted or limited. The concerns were warranted, but during the first workshop the teachers' attitudes became positive when they realized performance assessments could be very useful and beneficial for them and their students. Additionally, the teachers incorporated flexible structure and arts discipline-specific content when creating the assessment format. At the second workshop (after the performance assessment was piloted in their *own* classrooms), the "marriage" of curriculum and assessment was praised as a positive tool for teachers.

The classroom and magnet arts-related teachers shared concerns and problems related to assessing their art classes. Different teaching environments were a major influence for formatting a successful evaluation tool. Concerns at the first workshop revolved around the flexibility of the evaluation set-up (e.g., being sure the evaluation form was not restrictive to the arts). The second workshop addressed differences in basic and elective class structures, classes with limited one-on-one contact (e.g., large classes), class meetings that were irregular and infrequent, and class scheduling which resulted in insufficient time to immediately record feedback and comments. Throughout the two workshops, the teachers raised the issue of who was the target audience of the evaluation: the students, parents, teachers, or administrators?

A general evaluation template for visual art, dance, drama, and music was created by two specialists in E&R and Arts Education to serve as a starting point for discussion and was distributed at the first workshop. (See Attachment 1 for Dance, Drama, and Visual Art forms and Attachment 2A for Music.) The teachers then separated into discipline-specific groups to discuss, amend, and produce a new discipline-specific form. The Evaluation Specialist and K-12 Arts Program Specialist worked with each group to offer guidance in their areas of expertise. The teachers then worked in the computer lab to format, refine, and print the form.

RESULTS BY DISCIPLINE

The second workshop was a debriefing session for teachers to share results of the implementation of the pilot evaluations in their schools. Most evaluation systems were successful and only limited modifications were made. The teachers were excited about their experiences. The different art-discipline areas executed their evaluation systems differently and piloted their evaluation on different groups (e.g., case studies, group studies, and individual studies).

■ **Dance:** In an effort to fully acknowledge each student's strength and ensure fairness, the dance teachers created their first form with great detail. During the pilot evaluation, the dance teachers simplified their format to accommodate larger classes and classes that met infrequently. One dance teacher included the students in the evaluation process by allowing them to do self-assessments first. The teacher incorporated the student's assessment with her evaluation.

■ **Drama:** The drama teachers did case studies of three selected students based on classroom demonstrated persona (e.g., shy, average, and

outgoing). The classes chosen to pilot their evaluation were small, and detailed observation throughout the unit was therefore possible. One drama teacher wrote his comments on notecards which were easy to access and use. The notecards helped the teacher remember his comments and feedback on student performance.

■ **Music:** At the time of the workshops, the music teacher evaluation instrument was still being piloted and revised because of certain limitations (e.g., infrequent, large classes and insufficient time to immediately write down feedback).

However, one music teacher piloted her evaluation on a collaborative unit that was used to integrate learning about the rain forest to the students. She reported very positive results. The evaluation, as implemented, aided her as she gauged student progress, identified the needs of her students, incorporated student participation, increased her accountability, and decreased subjectivity. This music teacher identified the assessment as a valuable communications tool. "These models may be used for principal-teacher conferences, parent conferences, PTA presentations, etc. as a 'back-up' for what you are doing. We are all so involved in so many different things, it is often difficult to remember all of the wonderful and exciting things we are doing in our classrooms."

Attachment 2 illustrates the development of one music evaluation form. The attachment contains examples of the original form given at the first workshop, the edited form the music teachers collaboratively made at the first workshop, and one example form piloted in a music class.

■ **Visual Art:** The visual art teachers did individual student evaluations and found their system very user friendly. One visual art teacher created a template on his computer at school. He selected key objectives to remain constant on his template and updated other objectives for each unit. Another visual art teacher commented that the evaluation aided her in producing an organized form of documentation for a particular problem student. Having quick access to a form of documentation for this student increased her accountability to the principal, parent, and student.

CONCLUSION

Where do we go from here?

Staff plan to utilize a form of assessment and evaluation in the arts-related disciplines in the near future. The assessment system will undergo some refinement this summer as representatives from the different artistic areas meet with Central Office staff to finalize workable forms. The teachers who participated in these first workshops will provide leadership for other staff members in their disciplines as they focus on assessment in their 1995-96 staff development.

Art teachers have been assessing and evaluating their classes and students for years, but now their assessments can have a discipline-specific, coherent, written form. Because this is a pilot assessment, it will take time and commitment to incorporate assessment methods into the regular instruction. Once established, it will be a easily accessible instructional and evaluation tool. To attain this level of comfort, teachers need solid training (e.g., staff development). Teachers then will be able to confidently implement an assessment method in their classroom.

The evaluation process is a valuable tool for teachers: it benefits the teacher in planning class lessons, evaluating student success, increasing accountability, and sharing with other interested parties (e.g., funding agencies) overall progress of the arts in education.

PROJECT INFORMATION

For further information concerning this topic, contact Helmuts Feifs, E&R (850-1903) or Elizabeth Grimes, Arts Education (850-1784).

REFERENCES

Armstrong, T. (1994). Multiple intelligences in the classroom. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

U.S. Department of Education. (1994). Arts education research agenda for the future. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

ATTACHMENT 1

Arts Assessment Model--Dance
Working Draft

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Non-traditional Yes/No	Interesting 1-9 scale
Beginning			
Middle			
End			
Energy			
Tempo			
Shapes			
Levels			
Pathways in Space			

In a group setting were all involved in:	Yes/No
planning (demonstrated through rehearsal)	
execution (demonstrated through performance)	
criticism (demonstrated through discussion, journal writing)	

Performed with self-confidence	Yes/No
Consistently repeatable without mistakes	Yes/No
Performed cooperatively (no star)	Yes/No
Communicated the message clearly	1-9
Audience Appeal	1-9

Note: The Arts Assessment Models (Attachment 1 and Attachment 2A) have been retyped for this newsletter.

Arts Assessment Model--Drama
Working Draft

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Non-traditional Yes/No	Interesting 1-9 scale
Beginning			
Middle			
End			
Characterization			
Vocal Production			
Use of Body			

In a group setting were all involved in:	Yes/No
planning (demonstrated through rehearsal)	
execution (performance)	
criticism (discussion, journal writing)	

Performed with self-confidence	Yes/No
Consistently repeatable without mistakes	Yes/No
Performed cooperatively (no star)	Yes/No
Communicated the message clearly	1-9
Audience Appeal	1-9

Arts Assessment Model--Visual Art
Working Draft

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Non-traditional Yes/No	Interesting 1-9 scale
Fill the paper's space			
Variation- shapes/sizes			
Balance			
Center of Interest			
Movement			

During the creative process- in a group setting:	Yes/No
all involved in planning	
all involved in execution	
criticism (discussion, journal writing)	

Finished product	Yes/No
Talk about artwork with confidence	Yes/No
Select the appropriate art elements	1-9
Communicate the message clearly	1-9
Audience Appeal	

ATTACHMENT 2A

Arts Assessment Model--Music
Working Draft

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Non-traditional Yes/No	Interesting 1-9 scale
Rhythmic patterns recognizes			
Rhythmic patterns performs			
Rhythmic patterns uses creatively			
Meter			
Rhythmic notation			

In a group setting	Yes/No
all involved in planning	
all involved in execution	
criticism (discussion, journal writing)	

Performed with self-confidence	Yes/No
Consistently repeatable without mistakes	Yes/No
Performed cooperatively (no star)	Yes/No
Communicate the message clearly	1-9
Audience Appeal	1-9

Arts Assessment Model
Music

Product

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Personal Acquisition/ Meaning	Interest 1-9
Visually recognizes rhythm patterns			
Aurally recognizes rhythm patterns			
Identifies meters in 2,3,4			
Aurally identifies duple/triple meters			
Identifies tempo markings			
Maintains steady tempo			
Conducts meters in 2,3,4			
Performs rhythm patterns			
Create rhythm patterns			
Create rhythmic compositions			
Perform original rhythmic patterns and compositions			

Process

Whole Class/ Cooperative Groups	Yes/No
Planning	
Performance Cooperative work in groups Consistently repeat with reasonable accuracy	
Evaluation Self, Peer, Teacher	

Aesthetic

Clear communication	1-9
Aesthetic response	1-9
Performed with self-confidence	1-9

Comments:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ATTACHMENT 2C

Music

3rd-Grade: Rain Forest Unit; 1 lesson, Music objectives: Dynamics, Texture, Expression

Arts Assessment Model
Music

Product

Criteria/Objectives	Clear Yes/No	Personal Acquisition/ Meaning	Interest 1-9
Visually recognizes dynamic symbols and terms	y		
Aurally recognizes dynamic symbols and terms	y		
Performs dynamic symbols and terms	y	y	9
Creates sound compositions using dynamics	y	y	9
Performs sound compositions using dynamics	y	y	9
Verbally identifies texture	y		
Creates textures using dynamics	y	y	9
Creates sound composition using dynamics and texture as means for expression (performs above)	y	y	9

Process

Whole Class/ Cooperative Groups	Yes/No
Planning	y
Performance	
Cooperative work in groups	y
Consistently repeat with reasonable accuracy	y
Evaluation	
Self, Peer, Teacher	y

Aesthetic

Clear communication	1-9	9
Aesthetic response	1-9	9
Performed with self-confidence	1-9	9

Comments:

(see enclosed information about this unit)

11